

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 063836

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SUBJECT:GREEK AIDE MEMOIRE ON AEGEAN AIR-SPACE DISPUTE

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF AIDE MEMOIRE "CONCERNING THE
AEGEAN AIR-SPACE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY,"
THAT GREEK AMBASSADOR ALEXANDRAKIS GAVE MARCH 16 TO ASSIS-
TANT SECRETARY HARTMAN.

2. BEGIN TEXT.

-- IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE CYPRUS CRISIS (SUMMER 1974)
TURKEY ISSUED NOTAM 714 REQUIRING THAT ALL CIVILIAN AIR-
CRAFT HEADING FOR TURKEY ANNOUNCE THEIR POSITION TO THE
TURKISH FLIGHT CONTROL STATIONS AS THEY CROSSED A LINE,
WHICH WAS ARBITRARILY DRAWN ON THE MAP BY THE TURKISH
AUTHORITIES. THIS LINE ROUGHLY COINCIDED WITH THE WESTERN
BOUNDARIES OF THE PART OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF OF THE
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PAGE 02 STATE 063836

AEGEAN CLAIMED BY TURKEY. IN ADDITION THE TURKISH AUTHORI-

TIES SOUGHT TO TAKE OVER THE FLIGHT CONTROL OF ALL SUCH WESTBOUND AIRCRAFT FLYING WITHIN THE AREA IN QUESTION.

-- BY THE ABOVE MENTIONED NOTAM 714, TURKEY SOUGHT TO EXERT CONTROL OUTSIDE ITS OWN DESIGNATED AREA, NAMELY WITHIN THE ATHENS FLIGHT INFORMATION REGION (F.I.R.)

ESTABLISHED BY THE REGULATIONS OF THE ICAO AND BEING THE EXCLUSIVE RESPONSIBILITY OF GREECE. ACCORDING TO THESE REGULATIONS, THE EAST BOUNDARIES OF THE ATHENS F.I.R. COINCIDE WITH THE SEA BOUNDARIES OF THE GREEK ISLANDS OF THE EASTERN AEGEAN.

-- IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE FACTS AND THE DANGERS POSED TO INTERNATIONAL AVIATION AND ONLY AFTER THE RELEVANT PROTESTS BY GREECE REMAINED WITHOUT RESULT, GREECE WAS COMPELLED TO CLOSE ALL AIR CORRIDORS LEADING FROM GREECE TO TURKEY ISSUING NOTAM 1157 ON AUGUST 14, 1974. THESE CORRIDORS REMAIN CLOSED TO THIS DAY, AND AS A RESULT THE OPERATION OF TWO CIRCUITS CONNECTING F.I.R. ATHENS AND F.I.R. ISTANBUL IS DISCONNECTED.

-- IT SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THAT, AMONG OTHER FACTORS, CONSIDERATIONS OF A SERIOUS CHARACTER DICTATED THE GREEK ACTION. THE AIR-SPACE AREAS, THAT THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT SEEKS TO CONTROL COINCIDE WITH THE PART OF THE GREEK CONTINENTAL SHELF OF THE AEGEAN, UNLAWFULLY CLAIMED BY TURKEY. THEREFORE IT IS REASONABLE TO CONCLUDE THAT TURKEY HARBORS EXPANSIONIST DESIGNS IN THE AREA. BESIDES, WITHIN THIS AREA THERE ARE MANY LARGE INHABITED GREEK ISLANDS, OVER WHICH THE ABOVE MENTIONED CORRIDORS PASS. THUS, THE ATTEMPT TO CONTROL FLIGHTS OVER GREEK TERRITORY CONSTITUTES A VIOLATION OF THE SOVEREIGN RIGHTS OF GREECE.

-- SINCE THEN, DELEGATIONS (SIC) OF THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE HAD FOUR ROUNDS OF TALKS WITH A VIEW TO SOLVING THE PROBLEM AND SETTling THE EXISTING DIFFERENCES CONCERNING THE AEGEAN AIRSPACE. AS EARLY AS JULY 1975 DURING THE SECOND ROUND OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS, GREECE AND TURKEY AGREE ON SEVERAL SUBSTANTIAL POINTS RELATING TO THE EXCHANGE OF

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 063836

INFORMATION, MILITARY EXERCISES AND COOPERATION OF THE RELEVANT AVIATION AUTHORITIES IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE SMOOTH OPERATION OF THE AIR TRAFFIC OVER THE AEGEAN.

-- THE MAIN REMAINING OUTSTANDING POINT WAS THE SO-CALLED "SECURITY REQUIREMENTS" NAMELY THE TURKISH REQUEST THAT PRIOR INFORMATION FOR GREEK MILITARY FLIGHTS (FORMATIONS OF TWO OR MORE AIRCRAFT) WOULD BE GIVEN AUTOMATICALLY

(NOT ON REQUEST) BY ATHENS ATS AND THE FLIGHT CONCERNED WOULD REPORT ITS POSITION UPON REACHING A POINT 50 NM FROM INSTANBUL (SIC) F.I.R., EVEN IF THERE WAS NO INTENTION OF CROSSING THE F.I.R. BOUNDARIES.

-- SINCE THE SECOND ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS, GREECE, SEEKING THE SOLUTION OF THE ABOVE PROBLEM BUT AT THE SAME TIME

HAVING IN MIND THE PROTECTION OF HER SOVEREIGN RIGHTS, PUT FORTH SEVERAL PROPOSALS BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF RECIPROCITY AND THE DESIRE TO ACCOMODATE (SIC) LEGITIMATE TURKISH CONCERNS, RELATING TO TURKISH SECURITY.

-- THE TURKISH SIDE HOWEVER, NOT ONLY KEPT REJECTING THE GREEK PROPOSALS BUT ALSO KEPT ADVANCING NEW CLAIMS ON ISSUES ALREADY SETTLED DURING THE PREVIOUS ROUNDS OF TALKS.

-- IN THE COURSE OF THE FOURTH ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS CONDUCTED IN ATHENS LAST JANUARY, AND ONLY AFTER GREECE DISPLAYED A CONSIDERABLE DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY, THE TWO SIDES AGREED THAT FORMATIONS OF 4 OR MORE GREEK (OR TURKISH) STATE AIRCRAFT ENTERING THE INTERNATIONAL AIR SPACE OF THE AEGEAN OF THE ATHINAI (OR ISTANBUL) F.I.R., INCLUDED WITHIN A LIMIT OF N.M., (THE EXTENT OF THESE LIMITS REMAINED TO BE AGREED UPON), FROM THE ATHINAI-ISTANBUL (ISTANBUL-ATHINAI) BOUNDARY WOULD BE NOTIFIED AUTOMATICALLY. THE TWO DELEGATIONS FURTHER AGREED THAT ANY CLAUSE OF THIS SPECIAL AGREEMENT COULD IN NO WAY BE INTERPRETED AS GIVING GREECE AND TURKEY THE RIGHT OF EXERCISING AIR POLICY WITHIN THE AREA OF THE OTHER F.I.R. OR AS SUBSTITUTING THE GREEK AND TURKISH AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES HAVING RESPECTIVELY THE RESPONSIBILITY

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 063836

OF CONTROL.

-- ON THE OTHER HAND THE AGREED MINUTES OF THE AFOREMENTIONED ROUND OF TALKS CONTAINED AGREEMENT ON SUCH SUBSTANTIAL POINTS AS THE QUESTION OF EXCHANGE OF FLIGHT DATA WITHIN AND OUTSIDE CONTROLLED AIRSPACE, INFORMATION ON ADDITIONAL CIVIL FLIGHTS, COORDINATION ON AIRSPACE MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST AND PROCEDURES REGARDING THE ISSUANCE OF NOTAMS, AS WELL AS THE SETTING UP OF A STANDING COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS, THE TASK OF WHICH WOULD BE TO MEET PERIODICALLY IN ORDER TO REVIEW THE QUESTIONS WHICH MAY ARISE FROM IMPLEMENTATION AND STRENGTHEN THE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

-- HOWEVER, NOTWITHSTANDING WHAT WAS AGREED, ANKARA,

REPEATING ITS PREVIOUS TACTICS, SUBMITTED THEREAFTER AND AT THE END OF THE TALKS, A SERIES OF NEW PROPOSALS WHICH CONTAINED NEW UNACCEPTABLE TERMS, REVERSED ALL PREVIOUS UNDERSTANDINGS AND LED THE TALKS TO A DEADLOCK. THUS THE POSSIBILITY OF A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT WAS ELIMINATED AND SERIOUS DOUBTS HAVE BEEN CAST AS TO TURKEY'S WILLINGNESS TO REACH A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF THE AEGEAN AIRSPACE.

-- THE AEGEAN AIRSPACE IS STILL CLOSED TO INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAFFIC AND THIS POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ISSUE, WITH VERY DETRIMENTAL RAMIFICATIONS FOR THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, REMAINS UNSETTLED.

MARCH 16, 1976

END TEXT.

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